

DT Fellowship Simulation Assignment

Role: Growth Consultant

Title: Signal to Strategy: Boardroom Thinking for MSME Growth

Part 1: Bottleneck Diagnosis Using Prompted AI Dialogue

Simulated Founder Transcript Summary (300 words)

"I started this business with a simple goal: to bring high-quality, locally made fashion to middle-income customers. For the first three years, growth was steady. Now it feels like we've hit a wall. I still make most major decisions, even though we have 20 employees. I've tried delegating, but things start slipping when I do. I'm also struggling to hire people who can take ownership. Our marketing hasn't evolved — we're still relying on word-of-mouth and Instagram. We haven't cracked paid ads. We're not sure if customers are churning or just quiet. I feel like I'm always reacting — to problems, delays, drop-offs — instead of steering the ship."

Prompt 1: Mindset Diagnosis

Prompt: "Simulate a reflective coaching conversation with the founder. Identify beliefs around control, trust, and fear of delegation that may be holding them back. Focus on underlying mental models, not surface behaviors." - **Goal:** Uncover subconscious fears around delegation and decision-making. - **Cialdini Principle:** Consistency — surfacing whether their past patterns contradict present goals. - **Negative Prompt:** Avoid generic advice; root insights in the founder's language and lived experience. - **Likely Layer:** Founder's mental model

Prompt 2: Organizational / Systemic Issues Prompt: "From the transcript, identify specific process breakdowns related to hiring, task ownership, and internal communication. Recommend organizational rituals or role design shifts to rebuild reliability." - **Goal:** Map inefficiencies in internal ops and delegation. - **Cialdini Principle:** Authority — redesigning roles to give team members more defined ownership. - **Negative Prompt:** Avoid suggesting org charts or team restructures without contextual need. - **Likely Layer:** Talent/process capability

Prompt 3: Market & Capability Alignment Prompt: "Assess the marketing model described. Identify misalignments between the company's growth stage and current acquisition strategy. Recommend lean experiments to validate new channels." - **Goal:** Determine GTM gaps and outdated growth levers. - **Cialdini Principle:** Liking — leveraging existing customer affinity in new ways. - **Negative Prompt:** Don't default to paid ads unless supported by behavioral insight. - **Likely Layer:** Customer strategy or positioning

Part 2: Growth Readiness Scorecard (GRS)

1. Founder Operating System

- **Bottlenecks:**
 - Founder over-involved in all decisions
 - Fear of delegation leading to stagnation

- **Suggested Ritual:**
- Weekly founder "Let-Go Review" — where they identify 1 task to offload and assign with context.
- **AI Prompt:** "Help design a reflective journal prompt for the founder to track discomfort and clarity after each delegation moment."
- **Growth OS Stage:** Leadership Bottleneck / Founder Ceiling

2. Team & Process Capability

- **Bottlenecks:**
- Undefined roles; lack of reliable ownership
- No consistent review or alignment rituals
- **Suggested Ritual:**
- Monday "Mission Meeting" — 30-min team review of priorities + bottlenecks with RACI clarity
- **AI Prompt:** "Simulate a sample team meeting agenda that fosters accountability without micromanagement."
- **Growth OS Stage:** Delivery Engine Breakdown

3. Market Strategy & Customer Insight

- **Bottlenecks:**
- Reliance on passive channels (Instagram, word-of-mouth)
- No active churn or retention tracking
- **Suggested Ritual:**
- Monthly "Customer Echo" session — 3 user interviews turned into growth insights
- **AI Prompt:** "Draft 5 sharp, emotional interview questions to uncover why middle-income customers stop engaging."
- **Growth OS Stage:** Problem-Market Fit Drift

Part 3: Strategic Summary (Max 200 Words)

AI didn't just give me answers — it forced better questions. Prompting revealed blind spots I might have missed: like how the founder's control wasn't just a personality trait, but a survival instinct. It helped me simulate team dynamics, prototype rituals, and bring clarity to emotional bottlenecks — not just operational ones.

The one principle I'll carry forward: **assume tension is a signal, not a threat**. If something feels "off," it's probably revealing where the system is stuck.

A Growth Consultant must be a coach when listening, an analyst when mapping, and an operator when designing the fix. No single lens is enough — growth requires holding tension between empathy and execution.

I don't want to just solve problems. I want to help teams see them clearly, name them bravely, and move forward together.

End of Assignment